

## Thursdays With Mike by JoMo3

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** F/M

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Eleven (Stranger Things), Jim "Chief" Hopper, Mike Wheeler

**Relationships:** Eleven/Mike Wheeler

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2017-11-01

**Updated:** 2017-11-01

**Packaged:** 2022-04-02 01:53:35

**Rating:** General Audiences

**Warnings:** Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 2,979

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

Eleven needs a tutor in order to get her ready for when she eventually starts school. Hopper suggests Nancy, while El has someone else in mind.

## Thursdays With Mike

It was El's idea.

Hopper had eventually come around into letting her friends come over a few times a week. After listening to them talk about all of the things they were doing in school, Eleven had asked Hopper about when he thought *she* could begin school.

"We've gotta keep you a secret for just a little bit longer, El," Hopper had answered over dinner.

"How long?"

Hopper had shrugged. "When it's safe. Besides, we probably need to get you a tutor."

"Tutor?"

"Someone to teach you."

"I thought you were."

"I am, but maybe somebody who's a better teacher than me."

"Mike can," she said, her eyes brightening.

Hopper scoffed. "Yeah, right. You'll spend more time studying him than studying the books."

"Please?"

Hopper shook his head. "Maybe Nancy."

The two ate quietly for a few minutes until Eleven asked, "How about a...compromise?"

Hopper smiled, chuckling softly. "Look at you, remembering those words." Wiping his mouth with his napkin, he asked, "Okay. What do you propose?"

“Mike tutors me. After...some days, you can test me. If I don’t do good, I stop.”

Hopper took a moment to think about it, then nodded his head. “Alright. Deal. In five weeks, I’ll give you a test.” They shook on it.

That night Eleven contacted Mike on his radio and told him the good news.

## **First Session**

On Thursday his mom dropped him off at the cabin, promising to return in two hours. Mike walked up the steps, and did the secret knock he’d learned from Eleven on his last visit.

She opened the door, looking as happy to see him as he was to see her. They exchanged greetings as she let him in. Hopper sat on the couch, sipping a beer and watching TV.

“Hi Mr. Hopper,” Mike said. Then, added, “Sir.”

“Mike,” Hopper said.

Eleven led Mike to her room, and was about to close the door when Hopper said, “Leave it open.”

“Why? We need it quiet,” she responded.

Without looking away from the basketball game he was watching, Hopper repeated, “Leave it open.”

Eleven shrugged, and went back into her room. Mike stood between the door and the bed, taking in the room. Seeing her come back in, he smiled, and asked, “Ready to get started?”

Nodding, she sat on her bed, and scooted over to make room for him.

“Um, I think I’ll sit on the floor,” Mike said after glancing towards the door.

She looked confused. “Why?”

“I, uh, I don’t think Hopper would like me sitting on the bed,” Mike answered.

Shrugging, she nodded her head and joined him on the floor.

Not exactly sure where to start, Mike had gotten extra copies of his homework at school and figured he would see how she did with it. With the reading homework, her reading and comprehension were fine, though she struggled with harder words. Mike was glad that Hopper had a dictionary for her to use. After a while, she started writing down the words she was unfamiliar with to look up later. After the first hour she had a notebook page filled with words.

The second hour was devoted to math, and it was with that subject that Mike saw El struggle some; she struggled with multiplication.

Seeing her getting frustrated, he tore out a piece of paper from his notebook and started to make a makeshift multiplication table, writing numbers 1-12 vertically on the paper, and 1-12 horizontally.

“Multiplying is easy,” Mike explained, “It’s just repeated addition. Any number times zero is zero,” Mike said, writing zeros where the vertical and horizontal numbers met, “And any number times one is just the number, one time.” He then wrote the products of each number times on in each column.

“Now, two’s,” he began, “It’s, like, um...pretend you were going to make Eggo’s, okay? And you wanted two. How many Eggo’s would you need?”

She looked confused at this simple question. “Two?”

“Right,” he said, putting a two in the two times one box. “Now what if *I* wanted two Eggo’s, also. How many?”

She took a second, then answered, “Four.” Mike nodded, putting four where  $2 \times 2$  met. Mike continued through the rest of the two’s, adding Hopper, Dustin, Lucas, Will, Joyce, etc. as other participants in the Eggo-party.

By the time they had gotten to the eights, Hopper was standing in the doorway, telling Mike it was time to wrap things up.

“Um, okay, how about you finish the rest of the chart, El, and I can quiz you on multiplying next week, okay?” Mike asked as he stood up.

She nodded her head, also standing up. They walked to the door, Mike telling Eleven goodbye, and she giving him a hug as he left.

## **Second Session**

The following Thursday Eleven greeted Mike at the door as he arrived. Besides talking on the radio, the two hadn't seen each other since the previous week. They hugged, and then Mike came in and said hi to Hopper who, like last time, sat on the couch, sipping a beer and watching television.

Eleven was even happier than usual, Mike noticed, as he came in. She led him into the small kitchen and motioned for him to sit down at the table. Sitting across from him, she closed her eyes as two plates floated from the counter to the table. Mike wasn't surprised that they were waffles, but they looked different.

“You made Eggo's?” he asked her.

“Special Eggo's,” she told him. Looking closer, he saw the whipped cream and small pieces of candy tucked between the waffles.

“Triple Decker Eggos,” she explained, wiping away the trickle of blood from her nose and grabbing silverware for the two of them. “I wanted four waffles, and I wanted four for you,” she said as Mike started cutting into the food, “So I did four times four and got sixteen. Then I put eight candy corn on mine, and on yours, too, so....”

They spent the next twenty minutes devouring the waffles, with El explaining how she had used multiplication to make the Eggos, and Mike telling her about his day at school.

After their plates were empty, they spent the rest of the first hour going over math, with Eleven beginning to show signs of understanding algebra. The second hour was spent with Mike going over the words she hadn't known the previous week, and then going over some of the homework he'd received since last Thursday.

They wrapped things up around eight, as that was the time Mike's mom was supposed to come and get him. After hugging and exchanging goodbyes, Mike walked back out to the road, only to find it empty. Walking back, he did the secret knock on the door. Eleven opened it, a confused but happy look on her face.

"My mom's not here yet," Mike explained. "Is it okay if I wait here?"

Eleven let him in, and Mike looked around, no sign of Hopper. "Where is he?" Mike asked.

"Shower," she said.

"Oh."

So they sat on the couch while he waited. They could hear Hopper singing from the bathroom, and they both let out a giggle.

"Mike?" she asked.

"Yeah?"

"The first time you came over. Hopper said to leave the door open. Why?"

"Uh, um," Mike said, stuttering over his words, "Because he didn't want us to, you know...kiss or something. He wanted to make sure we were studying."

"Oh," she said, nodding her head in understanding. She then thought back to almost a month ago, the two of them dancing in the gymnasium, when Mike had gently put his lips on hers. An idea coming to mind, she glanced at the bathroom door, where Hopper's singing had ended, but she could still hear the water going. Turning back to Mike, she said, "Are we done? Studying?"

“Yeah...” Mike answered

“So we could...kiss, right?”

Mike’s cheeks turned red, and he glanced at the bathroom door. “Um, I mean, we could, but...”

She scooted closer to him, and closed the distance between them by placing a soft, quick kiss on his lips.

They both smiled as she pulled away; this was their third kiss, after the one in the cafeteria and the other at the SnowBall. Mike leaned in again, and his lips were just brushing hers when there was a knock at the front door.

Sighing, the two teens got up and found Mrs. Wheeler there. Mike told Eleven goodbye again, and left to go home.

### **Third Session**

Hopper had to work late the following Thursday, so he dropped El off at the Hawkins Library. Mike biked over and met her there.

Finding a corner table, they spent the first hour with Mike first quizzing Eleven on her multiplication facts, followed by solving algebra equations. El struggled with the algebra this time, so Mike said he’d find some extra practice for her.

They continued the process with reading during the second hour. Since they were in a library, Mike thought it might be a good idea for Eleven to get a book to read. The two perused the stacks, Mike looking for a book he knew enough about that he could ask her questions. He found a few, but Eleven shook her head, not interested. After a while she agreed to Peter Pan, a book Mike had read in elementary school.

“It takes in this place called Neverland,” he explained to her once they sat back down. “It’s about this boy, Peter, who flies, and he’s always fighting this bad guy called Captain Hook.”

She scrunched up her face. “Hook?”

Nodding, Mike continued, “His hand got bit off by a crocodile, so now he has a hook for a hand.” Mike made his hand into a hook shape, showing what he meant.

Eleven nodded her head.

They spent the rest of the second hour with Eleven reading the first chapter of Peter Pan, asking Mike for clarification on the few words she didn’t know.

Once she got through the first chapter, the remaining time was spent going over some of the words El hadn’t understood last week. At eight they left the library, and weren’t too surprised when they saw Hopper’s truck parked out front.

Exchanging hugs, Eleven climbed into the truck, while Mike biked home.

#### **Fourth Session**

Hopper had another late night on the next Thursday, and wouldn’t know how late he’d be. So this time he dropped El off at the Wheeler’s home. The two went to the dining room table.

Both were excited, knowing that tonight they’d have a little more time together. Hopper had said that he’d probably be working until 10, and their tutoring sessions usually went until eight o’clock.

The first hour they talked about Peter Pan, and talked about words she’d gotten stuck on. Mike had also prepared some story questions that they talked about.

When the second hour came around, Eleven handed Mike the homework he’d given her the previous Thursday.

Looking it over, a smile came to his face when he saw that she’d got everything right. “Good job, El,” he told her, which made her smile.



They worked through a new homework page after that, and he noticed she didn't really struggle with that, either.

When eight o'clock came around, they cleaned up and Mike asked her what Hopper would be quizzing her on next week.

"Multiplying," Eleven answered, with a smile. She knew she'd pass it.

"That's it?"

"And Peter Pan," she added.

"You want me to review with you or anything? Maybe I can come over early next Thursday and we can go over some stuff."

"Maybe," she said. She looked past him. "Can we go downstairs?"

"Uh, yeah, sure," he said.

The two went down into the basement. This was Eleven's first time back at the Wheeler's home in more than a year, and she smiled to herself as the memories came flooding back to her.

She smiled in particular when she saw something. "You kept it up," she said.

"What? Oh," Mike said, following her gaze. "The fort, yeah. Of course."

Smiling, she got to her knees and crawled inside. Looking up at him, she stuck her hand out, and pulled him in as well.

Even though it had only been a little more than a year, it was a tight squeeze for the two of them since they'd both done some growing. They sat shoulder to shoulder, their heads brushing the top of the fort.

"My mom," Mike said with a grin, "Kept trying to get me to take it down. She was so mad when she found out we'd kept you down here for a week."

Eleven chuckled, and rested her head on his shoulder.

"I knew you'd come back. I didn't know how, or when, but...I knew you were gonna come back."

She held his hand, and he squeezed it back.

"What do you want to do?" he asked. Turning his wrist slightly, he noted the time. "We've got a couple of hours."

"I just want to lay here, for a little bit," she said, letting go of his hand and laying on her back. Mike hesitated for a moment, then lay on his back as well.

"I'm glad you're back, El," he said softly.

"Me, too," she said, as she turned onto her side, facing him. She lay her head on his shoulder and closed her eyes.

They awoke some time later, Mike first, hoping his mother hadn't come downstairs. Mike waking up woke Eleven as well, and she sat up, rubbing her eyes. Mike glanced at his watch, saw that it was a little past ten.

"Well, there went our extra time together," Mike said with a grin.

"It was nice," Eleven said, turning back to him. Leaning close, she pushed hair out of his face.

Mike smiled back at her, then leaned in, kissing her. After a moment he pulled away, only for Eleven to pull him back a second later, pressing her lips back onto his. It lasted just a little longer than their previous kisses. El's hands wrapped around Mike's neck as she pulled herself closer, and his hands went to her hips as they both got lost in the moment.

"Mike?"

His mother's voice calling downstairs broke the two apart, though their hands gripped each other's in surprise.

"Y-yeah, mom?" he called back.

“Hopper’s here for El.”

“Oh. Okay, thanks.” Turning to the girl next to him, he asked, “You ready?”

Giving him a small smile, she nodded, and the two stood up.

## **Fifth Session**

On the fifth Thursday Nancy dropped Mike off at the edge of the woods, and he made the trek into the forest; over the treeline and up the steps to the door. After doing the secret knock, Mike was let in by Eleven. Hopper stood by the stove.

“Thought we’d have some dinner,” Hopper told him. “Now, I’m no expert cook like your mom, but I can make a pretty mean grilled cheese.”

“Cool.”

“You two go study for a bit, I’ll call you back when it’s ready.” As Mike and Eleven went towards her room, Hopper called, “Keep the door open!”

Once in her room, Eleven gave him a quick kiss, then the two sat on the floor and reviewed. Mike quizzed her on math facts and gave her some algebra problems he’d copied from his textbook. After that they got started reviewing Peter Pan when Hopper called them for dinner.

The three sat around the small table, Hopper and El on opposite sides while Mike sat on the end.

Hopper made small talk with Mike, asking him about school and how his folks were doing. When they had finished, and Eleven and Mike had cleared the plates, Hopper cracked his knuckles and announced that it was time to start the test.

Mike and Eleven took their seats, with Eleven finding Mike’s hand

under the table.

“You’ve got this,” Mike whispered to her. She nodded.

“Okay,” Hopper began. “Let’s start with this.” He pushed a piece of notebook paper across the table to El. She looked at the two problems on the page and felt a smile come to her face.

After that, Hopper talked with her about Peter Pan, asking questions that both Mike and El felt were too easy. Still, there was one question where Eleven hesitated, and Mike squeezed her hand under the table, giving her encouragement.

When the “test” was done, Hopper picked up the algebra practice and looked it over. After a second, he grimaced, and gave it to Mike. “I can’t figure this out,” he said. “Did she get it right?”

Mike smiled, and looked it over. Then, smiling, he looked at El and nodded. “You got them both right.”

Eleven smiled, and, getting up from her seat, wrapped Mike in a hug. Then turning to Hopper, asked, “So?”

Hopper slowly nodded his head. “Alright. He can keep tutoring you; seems like he’s doing a good enough job.” Hopper stood up, and ruffled Mike’s head. Then, to El, he said, “I’m going to go take a shower. Walk Mike out, okay.” Looking at Mike, he said, “Not bad, kid.”

“Thanks, sir,” Mike said, watching Hopper walk away into the bathroom. After the door closed, Mike turned to El, beaming. “You did it, El! I’m so proud of you.”

“Thank you,” she said, standing up. They gathered all of their materials and made the trek to the road. Seeing Nancy’s car approaching in the distance, Mike said, “Can I tell you something? Thursdays have been my favorite day of the week.”

She smiled, blushing. “Me too.”

Nancy’s car pulled up next to the two. The two teens hugged, and said goodbye. Eleven watched the car disappear into the night before

turning and going back to the cabin.